

PSYCHOLOGICAL ENVIRONMENT OF THE AFRICAN-AMERICAN

Pan-African Studies (PAS) 220

Instructor: Professor Bamidèlé (James) Bracy, Ph.D.

Fall 2009

Office: Santa Sussana (SS) (aka the red brick Faculty Office Building, across from the Matador Bookstore) – Room 215 or (PAS Dept. Office – Room 221)

Office Hours:

a.) **Immediately before or after class,**

OR

b.) **Tues. & Thurs. Office Hours:** 12:30 p.m. – 2 p.m.

OR

c.) **by telephone** (Meeting via telephone must be agreed to by the **instructor only**, at least 48 hours in advance.)

(Please Note: Instructor does not communicate with students via email. Sorry!)

Telephone No.: (818) 677-2020

Class Number, Ticket Number, Meeting Time, and Place:

Pas 220 (ticket # 11560) Tues. & Thurs. 9:30-10:45 a.m. Sierra Hall (SH), Room 280)

Pas 220 (ticket # 12454) Tues. & Thurs. 11:00 a.m. - 12:15 p.m. (SH), Room 280)

Major Texts:

THE PSYCHOLOGY OF BLACKS, third edition by Thomas A. Parham, Joseph L. White, & Adisa Ajamu (PWA)

African American PSYCHOLOGY: From Africa to America, 2nd edition by Faye Z. Belgrave & Kevin W. Allison (B&A)

Course Description:

“A study of contemporary American society and its effects on the African-American community from the perspective of basic psychological concepts and theories. (Available for General Education, Plan C: Social Sciences (D) or Plan R: Social Sciences (S3).)”

The purpose of this course is to examine the experience of blacks from a psychological perspective. Though the major focus of the course centers on the psychological consequences of being in America, the world-wide perspective (e.g., African) will also be represented. The development of the area, Black Psychology, from both an empirical and theoretical view will be emphasized.

Course Objectives:

The challenge of this course is to give each student the opportunity to explore new questions, issues, and concerns in the development of an African American / Black Psychology.

1. To critically examine being Black in America with a primary focus on basic psychological concepts and theories within an Afrocentric perspective.
2. The course will allow the student to begin to establish a perspective from which to view and assess the diverse experiences of Blacks/ African Americans in the United States and secondarily, as well in other parts of the Black diaspora.
3. To provide a foundation for sound intellectual inquiry, analysis, and interpretation of the common thread of humanity.
4. To provide a basis for improved self-awareness, building confidence, and increasing one's sensitivity to humanity's diversity.
5. To develop primary skills in critical analysis, reading comprehension, and clarity in written and oral communication.

Student Learning Outcomes:

- a. To acquire a knowledge regarding the dynamics of American society and its psychological effects on the African-American community.
- b. They will manifest ability to identify and understand commonalities and differences from an elementary psychological perspective of the African American's

cognitive, behavioral, and religious adaptations to American society existence.

- c. Students will manifest a better understanding of the linkages between traditional Western Psychology and a developing African Psychology.
- d. Students will understand the social psychological role that race, gender, and age plays in the social interaction patterns of various ethnic groups within the African American experience.
- e. Students will manifest a better understanding of the linkages between theory and praxis; male and female; young and elderly; present-day and future African American challenges.

Course requirements + (% of Final Grade):

- a. Class attendance and knowledge; positive participation in class/group discussions =**10%**

(Please Note) : after **4** absences, and lack of positive participation, final grade will be effected!) In other words, from the fifth (**5**) absence on, **no matter what the reason**, the final grade is **reduced** by approx. **15%**.

- b. 1st Review Exam (**25%**), 2nd Review Exam (**25%**), & Final Examination (**35%**) (long form Scan-Tron answer sheets using # 2 pencils required).

OPTIONAL EXTRA CREDIT OPPORTUNITIES

Special Event Report (SER): With prior approval from the instructor, **(10) pts. max.** a student may wish to earn additional credit (points) by attending and passing-in a typed, three to four page report on a “special” event focusing primarily on the African-American culture. The student may do **only** one (**1**) SER.

SER Format – 1st page or so describes the program or event; and the 2nd page through 4th or so discusses what the student did &/or did not gain from the experience. The student should be sure to include as well such things as the audience’s reaction; if possible, brief summaries of other published critics; and how effective the program and each presenter was in reaching their objectives. A well researched elaborative narrative is expected.

The typed SER will be double-spaced, and based on a previously instructor-student agreed upon specific program/event. All such agreed upon SERs are due at the latest, two weeks after the event. No SER will be accepted after the two-week deadline for submission. (**Please Note:** No SER’s will be accepted after **Weds., November 25th**) It is expected of each student to have become familiarized with assigned readings by that week in which a specific topic is due to be covered. Though infrequent, from time-to-

time there may be an occasional (in-class/ or out-of-class) assignment. Normally, there will be **no make-up exams**. (**Please Note: Even illness may not justify absence from an exam!**) In addition, **Final Examination times** are set by the university and **will not be altered**.

(In extremely unusual circumstance, however, the instructor may at his discretion waive the “no make-up” rule &/or an individual’s Final Examination time.) Though a student may receive an “F” on the missed exam, it will be the instructor’s prerogative on whether the exam letter grade can be made up or not.

Standards for Student Conduct (both inside & outside the classroom): See end of syllabus & also pages 534-53 of the 2006-2008 Undergraduate/Graduate Catalog.

Academic Honesty: See pages 536-538 of the 2006-2008 Undergraduate/Graduate Catalog.

Cheating, plagiarism, and student misconduct will not be tolerated.

PLUS & MINUS GRADING: This course’s grading includes +’s & -’s.

TENTATIVE SCHEDULE --- SUBJECT TO CHANGE

| <u>DATE</u> | <u>CHAPTERS</u> |
|--------------------|--|
| August 25 | Preface & Chapter 1 : African-Centered Psychology In the Modern Era & (pp. 1-23) – (PWA) |
| September 1 | Preface & Chapter 1. Introduction to African American Psychology (pp. 1-26) – (B&A) |

*** **September 8th : Bracy’s Tuesday Classes Cancelled [Furlough]** ***

| | |
|----------|--|
| Sept. 10 | continue reading Chapt. 1. (B&A) & Chapter 2. Africentric Psychology (pp. 27-60) – (B&A) |
| Sept. 15 | Chapt. 2 : The African-American Family (pp. 24-39) – (PWA) |

&
Chapt. 3. : Kinship and Family (pp. 123-156) (**B&A**)

Sept. 22 Chapt. 3 : The Struggle for Identity Congruence (pp. 40-53) – (**PWA**)

&
Chapt. 3. Self-Attributes and Racial Identity (pp. 61-94) – (**B&A**)

***** Thursday, October 1st 1st REVIEW EXAM *****

October 6 Chapt. 4 : Psychological Issues in the Education of African American
People (pp. 54-79) – (**PWA**)

&
Chapt. 6. Educational Systems (pp. 157-186) – (**B&A**)

Oct. 13 Chapt. 5 : Contemporary Approaches to Developmental Psychology ---
African American Perspective (pp. 80-92) – (**PWA**)

&
Chapt. 11. Lifespan Development (pp. 297-328) – (**B&A**)

***** October 15th : Bracy's Thursday Classes Cancelled [Furlough] *****

Oct. 20 Chapt. 9. Cognition, Learning, and Language (pp. 241-266) – (**B&A**)

&
Chapt. 10. Religion and Spirituality (pp. 267-296) - (**B&A**)

Oct. 27 Chapt. 4. Race and Racism (pp. 95-122) – (**B&A**)

&
“Catch-up” and review for second review exam

***** Thursday, November 3rd 2nd REVIEW EXAM *****

WHAT PROFESSOR EXPECTS FROM STUDENTS

DO:

1. Complete all assignments on time.
2. Attend class regularly, be on time, and remain for entire session.
(Please Note: If you must leave class early, please request permission of professor before class begins. It is considered highly discourteous to leave a class during its session!!!)
3. Come to class well-groomed, properly dressed, and alert.
4. Read assignments before class. (It is better to read a week's assignments the weekend before the topic is to be discussed in class.)
5. Ask questions --- but not to the point of annoyance or distraction.
6. Show interest in the subject. (Even if you have to "fake it!")
7. Take adequate notes.
8. Obtain the web address & telephone # of at least two other students in the class in order to form a study group, converse on assignments, and in case of an emergency.
9. Be collegial with the students in your class.
10. Be courteous & follow any reasonable requests by guest speakers.
11. Make appointment with professor in advance if you have any questions or problems which cannot be resolved just before or after class.
(*Please Note:* Please understand professors are busy too! So try to arrange appointments around posted office hours. If another time other than posted office hours must be arranged, please understand that the professor is "going out of his or her way" to accommodate you.)

DO NOT:

- a. Use Laptops while class is in session (*Exception to this rule* – written medical verification on medical specialist's stationary). Student presenters may, however, if so applicable, use their laptops for their individual or group presentations.
- b. Talk excessively or carry on long conversations during a lecture.

- c. Study for other classes during class session.
- d. Read material (e.g., “Sundial”, newspapers, magazines, texts or material from another class).
- e. Use cell phones, ear or head phones; or bring digital/tape recorders to class.
- f. If previously absent, ask the professor if you missed anything important.
(Please Note: All classes are considered important by the professor!)
- g. Sleep, put your head down on your desk, or close your eyes & take a nap during class.
- h. Gather your things and get up to leave during the class session or leave to go to the restroom and fail to return.
- i. Be discourteous, disrespectful, or insolent.

(Please Note: This includes not only your fellow students and faculty, but the staff as well, especially the administrative assistants and secretaries!! Please remember, their first priority is to assist administrators and faculty in “running” the university, not “drop” everything & cater to your immediate wishes or needs. They’re oftentimes busy, too!)

Just consider this document an “unofficial” contract between you, the student, & Prof. Bracy